

March 27, 2007

**Statement by Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman,
DWR Director Lester Snow and DFG Director Ryan Broddrick
on Watershed Enforcers v. Department of Water Resources**

The following are statements made by Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman, DWR Director Lester Snow and DFG Director Ryan Broddrick during a Resources Agency media briefing on March 23, 2007 to express disagreement with a proposal that could shutdown crucial Delta water pumps.

"We obviously strongly disagree with the court's proposed decision and will present additional information to challenge (it)."

"We believe the difficult and complex issues related to threatened and endangered species in the Delta cannot be intelligently resolved within the 60 day time limit imposed by the Judge in the stay of his proposed decision. We intend to use the 15 day time period between today and when the proposed decision is made final to make this more clear to the judge."

—Mike Chrisman

"We're perplexed with the court's ruling in this case. We find the prospect of curtailment of pumping to be unacceptable."

"We are committed to developing a cutting edge conservation package for the Delta, and have been for some time. We're also working with federal agencies on development of a new biological opinion. We certainly will suggest that the judge reconsider his draft decision and put it in terms that are more logical and acceptable to developing a conservation program for the Delta."

"We are committed to fixing the problem, we're committed to protecting Delta smelt and other endangered species, and we're committed to maintaining the economy of the State of California."

—Lester Snow

"We need to have a response that deals with the long-term health of the delta. We want to find solutions for the delta that have long-term sustainability. The (60-day) time frame offered is not sufficient."

—Ryan Broddrick

Alameda County Superior Court Judge Frank Roesch issued a proposed decision on March 22 that State Water Project pumps sending water to the San Francisco Bay Area, Central and Southern California must be turned off within 60 days unless the state complies with permit procedures designed to protect endangered fish. DWR has 15 days to submit additional information to the court for consideration.

The ruling followed filing of a suit last December by the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance alleging that the state did not have the appropriate permit to take certain fish species (spring and winter-run salmon and delta smelt) during pumping operations at the Harvey O. Banks Pumping Plant near Byron, in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

DWR has asserted that it does have a “take” permit through a series of documents formalized over the past 15 years or so. State agencies are also engaged in a formal process to develop the Delta’s largest and most comprehensive habitat conservation plan. This plan will ensure that water users do their part to contribute to the recovery of Delta fish species.